

In The Title

Please change the title on page 1 to:

-- Food Processing Apparatus --

Please insert after the title on page 1:

---Cross Reference to Related Application

This application is a continuation application of presently copending U.S. Application Serial No. 09/705,017, filed November 2, 2000 and entitled "Frameless Blancher for Food," now U.S. Patent No. 6,615,707, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference. ---

In The Claims

Please cancel claims 1-16.

Please add new claims 17-37 as follows:

17. A food processing apparatus comprising:

a panel defining a food product processing chamber having a pair of longitudinally disposed ends;

a pair of endplates, one of the endplates disposed at one end of the chamber and the other one of the endplates disposed at the other end of the chamber;

an exteriorly disposed cross-brace that extends from one of the endplates to the other one of the endplates; and

wherein the panel, the pair of the endplates, and the cross-brace define a frame of the food processing apparatus.

18. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein each endplate includes a portion thereof upon which it is capable of resting on a horizontal surface.

19. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein the panel is comprised of metal and has a generally U-shaped, transverse cross-section.

20. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, further comprising a device disposed in the food product processing chamber that rotates during operation, urging food product disposed in the food product processing chamber.

21. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein the panel is comprised of a sheet formed to have a concave shape and which is of one-piece and unitary construction.

22. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein each endplate is comprised of a sheet of one-piece and unitary construction.

23. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein the cross-brace is comprised of one-piece, tubular, and unitary construction.

24. The food processing apparatus of claim 17, wherein the panel is comprised of a sheet formed to have a concave shape and which is of one-piece and unitary construction, each endplate is comprised of a sheet of one-piece and unitary construction, and the cross-brace is comprised of one-piece, tubular, and unitary construction.

25. A food processing apparatus comprising:

a panel of one-piece and unitary construction that comprises a food product processing chamber;

a pair of endplates of one-piece and unitary construction, one of the endplates disposed at one end of the panel and the other one of the endplates disposed at the other end of the panel;

a pair of cross-braces that extends from one of the endplates to the other one of the endplates; and

wherein the panel, the pair of the endplates, and the cross-braces form the frame of the food processing apparatus.

26. The food processing apparatus of claim 25, further comprising a device disposed in the food product processing chamber that rotates during operation, urging food product disposed in the food product processing chamber.

27. The food processing apparatus of claim 25, wherein each cross-brace is comprised of one-piece, tubular, and unitary construction.

28. The food processing apparatus of claim 25, wherein the panel has a generally upturned U-shaped and transverse cross-section.

29. A food processing apparatus comprising:

a panel of one-piece and unitary construction that comprises a food product processing chamber that has an inlet end and an outlet end;

a pair of endplates of one-piece and unitary construction, one of the endplates disposed at the inlet end of the panel and the other one of the endplates disposed at the outlet end of the panel;

a pair of cross-braces that is each comprised of one-piece, unitary and tubular construction and which interconnects the endplates;

a rotary device disposed in the food product processing chamber that rotates during operation; and

wherein the panel, the pair of the endplates, and the cross-braces comprise a frame of the food processing apparatus.

30. The food processing apparatus of claim 29, wherein the panel has a generally upturned U-shaped, transverse cross-section.

31. The food processing apparatus of claim 29, wherein the rotary device extends substantially the length of the food product processing chamber and which urges food product disposed in the food product processing chamber during operation.

32. The food processing apparatus of claim 29, further comprising a downturned generally U-shaped removable cover.

33. A food processing apparatus comprising:

a panel of one-piece, unitary, and generally upturned U-shaped construction that comprises a food product processing chamber that has an inlet end and an outlet end;

a pair of endplates of one-piece and unitary construction, one of the endplates disposed at the inlet end of the panel and the other one of the endplates disposed at the outlet end of the panel;

a pair of cross-braces that is each comprised of one-piece and unitary construction and which interconnects the endplates;

a rotary device disposed in the food product processing chamber that rotates and urges a food product during operation;

a downturned generally U-shaped cover that overlies and mates with the panel; and

wherein the panel, the pair of the endplates, and the cross-braces define a frame of the food processing apparatus.

34. A food processing apparatus comprising:

a panel of one-piece, unitary, and three-dimensionally contoured construction that defines a food product processing chamber that has an inlet and an outlet;

a pair of endplates of one-piece and unitary construction, one of the endplates disposed adjacent the inlet and the other one of the endplates disposed adjacent the outlet;

a pair of tubular cross-braces disposed exteriorly of the food product processing chamber and which underlie the panel, the cross-braces interconnecting the endplates;

a rotary device disposed in the food product processing chamber that rotates and urges food product during operation; and

a cover that overlies the panel,

wherein the panel, the pair of the endplates, and the cross-braces define a frame of the food processing apparatus.

35. A food processing apparatus comprising:

(a) a cover movable between a closed position and an open position disposed away from the closed position; and

(b) a frame integrally formed of

(i) a concave panel;

(ii) a pair of endplates each of one-piece, unitary construction, with one of the endplates disposed at one end of the panel and the other of the endplates disposed at the other end of the panel; and

(iii) a pair of spaced apart cross-braces disposed outwardly of the panel and which extend from one of the endplates to the other one of the endplates.

36. The food processing apparatus set forth in claim 35, wherein each cross-brace comprises a tube that interconnects the endplates.

37. The food processing apparatus set forth in claim 35, wherein the panel is of imperforate construction.